

What is claimed is:

1. A communication interface for a gaming machine comprising:

(a) a main communication board comprising;

at least one power connection,

a communication connection configured to communicate with a master gaming controller of the gaming machine, and

at least one standard receptor slot; and

(b) a daughter board configured to plug into the receptor slot of the main communication board and thereby provide a specified communication format ~~for allowing the gaming machine to communicate.~~

2. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the daughter board provides a communication format allowing the master gaming controller to communicate with a gaming machine device.

3. The communication interface of claim 2, wherein the gaming machine device is a magnetic card reader, a display screen, a key pad, a network device or a display sign.

4. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the daughter board provides a communication format allowing the master gaming controller to communicate with a gaming machine network.

5. The communication interface of claim 4, wherein the gaming machine network is a casino area network or a wide area progressive network.

6. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the communication format is selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop and USB.

7. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the communication connection between the main communication board and the master gaming controller is configured for an RS-232 communication format or a USB communication format.

5 8. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the standard receptor slot is configured to accept a 15 pin connector.

9. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the standard receptor slot is configured to accept a connector with one or more ground pins and one or more power pins wherein the ground pins are longer than the power pins on the connector.

10 10. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the standard receptor is configured to supply power and a communication signal to the daughter board when the daughter board is plugged into the standard receptor slot.

11. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the power connection is configured to receive power from a substantially non-varying power source.

15 12. The communication interface of claim 1, further comprising a second power connection wherein the second power connection is configured to receive power from a power source which is shut off by a switch within the gaming machine.

20 13. The communication interface of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is a traditional slot game, a video slot game, a video poker game, keno game, or a lottery game.

14. A daughter board for converting signals in a first communication format from a master gaming controller to a second communication format for transmission, the daughter board comprising:

25 a standard connector for plugging into a standard receptor slot of a main communication board on the gaming machine and for receiving the signals in the first communication format from the master gaming controller;

conversion circuitry for converting signals from said first communication format to said second communication format; and

an output mechanism coupled to said conversion circuitry and allowing transmission of signals in said second format,

wherein the standard connector is employed in a plurality of daughter boards providing conversions between differing communications formats.

5 15. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the first communication format is RS-232 or USB.

16. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the second communication format is selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop or USB.

10 17. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the first communication format is selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, RS-232, DCS Current Loop and Link Progressive Current Loop.

15 18. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the conversion circuitry provides a communication conversion allowing the master gaming controller to communicate with a gaming machine device.

19. The daughter board of claim 18, wherein the gaming machine device is a magnetic board reader, a display screen, a key pad, a network device or a display sign.

20 20. The daughter board of claim 18, further comprising an optocoupler integrated circuit wherein in the optocoupler integrated circuit is configured to provide electrical isolation between the gaming machine device and the main communication board or electrical isolation between the gaming machine network and the main communication board.

25 21. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the conversion circuitry provides a communication conversion allowing the master gaming controller to communicate with a gaming machine network.

22. The daughter board of claim 21, wherein the gaming machine network is a casino area network or a wide area progressive network.

23. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the output mechanism is a fiber optic cable, a ribbon line cable, twisted pair cable or other wire medium.

24. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the standard connector is a 15 pin connector.

5 25. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the standard connector is configured to receive power from the main communication board.

26. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the standard connector is configured to have one or more power pins and one or more ground pins wherein the ground pins are longer than the power pins.

10 27. The daughter board of claim 14, wherein the first communication format is a Fiber Optic standard.

28. The daughter board of claim 27, further comprising an echo disable circuitry wherein the echo disable circuitry is configured to receive a signal that disables the transmission of signals from the output mechanism.

15 29. In a gaming machine having a master gaming controller and a main communication board allowing communication via various communications formats, a method of communicating with a gaming machine via multiple communication formats, the method comprising:

20 providing a first daughter board in a first standard receptor slot of the main communication board, which first daughter board converts signals in a first communications format from the master gaming controller to signals in a second communications format for transmission; and

25 replacing the first daughter board with a second daughter board in the first standard receptor slot of the main communication board, which second daughter board converts signals in a first communications format from the master gaming controller to signals in a communications format, other than the first communication format, for transmission.

30. In a gaming machine having a master gaming controller and a main communication board allowing communication via various communications formats,

a method of communicating with a gaming machine network and with a gaming device via multiple communication formats, the method comprising:

5 providing a first daughter board in a first standard receptor slot of the main communication board, which first daughter board converts signals in a first communications format from the master gaming controller to signals in a second communications format for transmission to the gaming machine device;

10 providing a second daughter board in a second standard receptor slot of the main communication board, which second daughter board converts signals in a first communications format from the master gaming controller to signals in a third communications format for transmission to the gaming machine network; and

15 replacing the first daughter board with a third daughter board in the first standard receptor slot of the main communication board while the second daughter board converts signals in a first communications format from the master gaming controller to signals in a third communications format for transmission to the gaming machine network

31. The method of claim 30, wherein the gaming machine network is a casino area network or a wide area progressive network.

32. The method of claim 30, wherein the third communication format is a fiber optic communication standard.

20 33. The method of claim 30, wherein the first communication format is an RS-232 communication standard.

34. The method of claim 30, wherein the gaming machine device is selected from a group consisting of a magnetic card reader, a display screen, a key pad, a network device or a display sign.

25 35. The method of claim 30, wherein the second communication format is selected from the group consisting of RS-422/485, Fiber Optic, RS-232, DCS Current Loop, Link Progressive Current Loop and USB.

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